FREEDOM

AN ANARCHIST WEEKLY

NEW SERIES, VOL. I, No. 10 MARCH 18, 1933 FIVE CENTS

NOTES AND COMMENTS

Anarchism in Action

One of the principles long ago accepted by Anarchists is that the social revolution will assume different forms in different places. This idea seems as sound now as when it first came to my attention, for the simple reason that it is unthinkable that people with widely different temperaments, backgrounds and economic methods will all act in the same manner in a given crisis. In the spring of 1922—six months before the Fascisti seized power in Italy—Malatesta informed me that the revolution, which he considered overdue, would probably assume three distinct forms in Italy. In one section, he predicted that it would be Social Democratic, in another Mazzinian Republican, and in the third, Anarchist. That he underestimated the forces of reaction is no more to his discredit than it is discreditable to Karl Marx that he foresaw the social revolution by the end of the nineteenth century.

In America, we are confronted with the heritage of "rugged individualism," and a complete absence of any social revolutionary background. As a group, the farmers are probably exploited more ruthlessly and are more poverty-stricken than any other, nevertheless they are individualistic to the core. They want assistance from the government just as the capitalist wants it, to protect "their property" but neither one of them wants to be interfered with in "his" business. If we admit the fact that Marxian Socialism, the Single Tax, Communist and Individualist Anarchism have, despite the years of labor and devotion put into these movements, hardly made a dent in the lives of the people of this country, we are realists and not romanticists. The latter-day political Communists and Bolshevists are in a like condition, and every intelligent revolutionist knows it, in spite of anything said to the contrary.

In view of these facts, and they are facts, with the breakdown of capitalism impending, what do we intend to do other than indulge in talk about seizing factories, banks and what not with little, if any, idea where we are to get raw materials for those factories, food supplies for the people or the transportation of both from country to city or vice versa? It is notorious that none of the revolutionary parties or groups has any connection whatever with the farmers of the country or even a program for approaching them, yet all talk glibly about what they intend to do when this breakdown comes. The farmers in their granges, with a single economic interest and background, varying in degrees but not in kind, have far better possibilities for united action than the industrial workers of the country have with a corrupt and reactionary leadership. Under such conditions, it is idle to talk of organizing food committees to canvass a city or cities to learn the needs of the people when nothing has been done to get in touch with those who supply the food. For years it has been known that New York City has food supplies for not more than six days, and if the flow of those supplies were interrupted for longer than that, the inhabitants would have to go on rations. In spite of this the soapbox orator despises the farmer, ignoring or overlooking that he is essential to the success of any revolution. That one cannot eat factories the workers in Italy learned to their dismay in 1920. But what are trifles like that to those calling themselves "violent revolutionists"?

At present there are farmers all over the country suffering for lack of proper clothing, shoes and a thousand other things that make up the life of the modern man. They are even suffering for lack of food because very few of them raise enough products of a diversified character to maintain themselves. On the other hand, city workers are struggling to maintain themselves on an average of less than $2 a week for groceries per person, and lack the necessary clothing and other things essential to maintain their self respect. Under such conditions is there not every reason for Anarchists to take the initiative in trying to bring about some co-operation with farmers along the lines of voluntary exchange of products? It seems so to us, at any rate. George Brown used to say that most people commit an act and then apply a principle to it—probably because they feel the need of a moral justification for the act. In the city of Minneapolis, eighteen thousand families, representing probably eighty thousand persons, are living wholly or in part on the barter system, without the use of money. Five hundred men, ex-bankers and ex-plumbers working side by side, are doing a "business," which in this case is really an exchange, of $7,000 a day with 1,500 people passing daily through their store. A life is being built here on co-operative lines that are purely voluntary and with which any Anarchist can work. Perhaps it was adversity that brought them together and is holding them fast. Whatever it is, it embodies the spirit of mutual aid which we are all working for. It is unimportant that a Methodist minister was the founder and moving spirit of the entire movement. The important point for us to consider is that it is inherently Anarchistic in spirit.

If we think that we cannot work with ministers, then let us show that we can and will do these things ourselves. Let us organize our groups for production; garment workers, for instance, and then get in touch with groups of farmers, asking them what they can exchange for clothing, taking simple things at first like cheap dresses for women and children, men's shirts, sweaters and so on, and place the goods in stores where it can be paid for in groceries, vegetables, etc. Laugh at it, pooh pooh it, as you will, it brings food and clothing where it is most needed and with it strength and a will to live and do things. It requires initiative and a willingness to do something besides talk.

Anarchism is based on initiative and a willingness to do things; to think things out for oneself and to act on them instead of waiting for supermen and salvation. Will we rise to it? I wonder?

* * *

Railroads

Samuel Untermeyer, noted lawyer, recently made a speech over the radio to a nation-wide audience in which he said that it was a case of Hobson's choice with the railroads, in that they were faced with bankruptcy or government ownership. Untermeyer is in favor of government ownership, and, being a practical man of business, suggested that this was a good time to buy while prices are low. Letters to The New York *Times* by two prominent citizens followed. From them we learn the following: Twenty-six billions of dollars have been put in the railroads; the government experts estimate their value at nineteen billion, and Untermeyer thinks they can be bought for ten billion. Untermeyer pointed out that one thousand railroad executives draw salaries. enormous salaries, some as high as $100,000 a year each. He did not state what the average was but if we cut the amount mentioned in half it would mean that the salaries of the executives alone amount to $50,000,000 a year. A pretty high figure for men running a bankrupt business! Usually when men run a business into bankruptcy they are considered failures and are fired. But in this case, instead of being fired, they get $50,000 or more a year. Now they are trying to unload the bankrupt business on the country. As one of the letter writers pointed out, the government is usually generous when it condemns property, so it is certain that they will pay more than ten billion. It will probably take over this bankrupt business for fifteen billion dollars and add it to the twenty-one billion dollar national debt we now have, making about forty billion in all. After that the bankrupt business will be in the hands of the politicians, which, as far as the plain man is concerned, is a distinction without a difference.

Eleven or twelve years ago the railroad brotherhoods submitted the Plumb Plan for taking over the roads, but being Guild Socialism in a modified form, it was considered too radical. It had the merit of being based on a form of management that included the men working on the roads, and that of course would never do, at least it wouldn't do then, but better times are coming. Perhaps, faced with bankruptcy or government ownership, another Plumb Plan might be submitted and this time might go over. It would not be Anarchism but it would be workers' control, and that would be something.

* * *

Both Your Houses

The silly season is always with us, as we were reminded last week in reading some dramatic reviews or what purported to be reviews of a new play, "Both Your Houses," by Maxwell Anderson, co-author of "Gods of the Lightning." The play deals with corruption in Washington and our sappy critics call it outdated and are speculating on its reception had it been produced a few weeks earlier while the last Lame Duck Congress was in session. In other words, now that Franklin D. Roosevelt and a Democratic Congress with a sizeable minority of Republicans have been elected this tale of congressional corruption has suddenly become outdated. It is hard to believe that even dramatic critics are so feeble-minded as to think that there will be less log rolling, less corruption and more honesty in this Congress than in the last; who is always reminding us that "you can't change human nature"? We haven't seen "Both Your Houses," but venture to say it is as close to life now as it would have been before March 4th, for the leopard remains the leopard.—H. K.

FREEDOM

Successor to ROAD TO FREEDOM

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Rudolph Rocker

Comrades and readers of FREEDOM will, we are sure, join with us in extending heartiest greetings to Rudolph Rocker on the anniversary of his sixtieth birthday, March 25th. His devotion and years of service to the cause of human freedom are matched only by his scholarship, erudition and firm grasp of Anarchist principles. And it is no mere figure of speech to say that it is beyond our ability to express in words our opinion of the work done by him for Anarchism. He is living through dark and difficult days in Germany just now, but as Thomas Paine said, "Where liberty is *not* there is my country," and we are sure he will do his best as he has always done, and we wish him health and a long life for his own sake and the cause he loves so well.

To Our Readers:

The comrades responsible for publishing FREEDOM feel that they must have overestimated the interest of the comrades throughout the country in the paper, for sufficient financial support has not come in to warrant the publication of a weekly.

According to information gathered from reliable comrades, there are about seventy-five groups in the United States. If this is so, and each group would make itself responsible for $2.00 weekly either in subscriptions or buying papers to resell, a weekly could be published. Is this so difficult? Pending this or something like it, FREEDOM will be published monthly, beginning April 15th.

* * *

Berkman, Sartin, Graham:

We have received letters from Comrades Berkman, Sartin (editor, *L'Adunata*), and Marcus Graham, all dealing with the letter of Comrade Berkman, printed in our issue of February 11th. We held the letter for four weeks, and hearing nothing about its being printed in *L'Adunata* printed it in FREEDOM. A second letter came from Berkman asking us not to print the first one, but unfortunately it was too late. Comrade Sartin writes saying, "I did *not* write that Emma Goldman was pro-Bolshevik in the Kronstadt tragedy, but I wrote exactly the contrary, that she had been accused of having been pro-Bolshevik *until* the Kronstadt massacre." Graham offers to defend his criticism of the book. Inasmuch as Berkman requested us not to print his first letter we take it that he feels he unknowingly misquoted Comrades Sartin and Graham. We are sorry the letter appeared and hope this ends the matter.

A Memorial Tribute

To Marie Goldsmith and Her Mother
(Died in Paris, January 9 and 11, 1933.)

By M. NETTLAU

Two of the most devoted friends of the real Russian Revolution and of the International Anarchist Idea, friends also of all the very best of us and of so very many of us, have left us; the mother expiring after years of cruel suffering in her eighty-third year on the morning of January 9th, and the daughter, attending her to the last, taking poison when her mother's life was extinct, and dying without recovering consciousness two days later. So is gone this small and lovable family whose modest room was, for the evenings of so many years, such a bright little oasis of Russian, French, international libertarian thought and revolutionary aspirations; where many opinions were expressed, but from where fanaticism and intolerance felt themselves banished, or were soon discouraged, by the ever friendly, calm, serious attitude and clever reasoning of the two hostesses.

The mother had been one of the many Russian girls and women studying in Zurich when Bakunin spent the memorable summer of 1872 there and was followed by the moderate Peter Lavrov. She knew all the enthusiastic young Russian revolutionists: Vera Figner and many others. Her own part in the movement may have been small, but she became by intellect and sentiment a part of this milieu and lived in it ever afterward, for sixty long years. She became the wife of Isidor Goldsmith, who in St. Petersburg in the seventies published a Positivist review, "*Znanie*" ("Knowledge"). They were exiled to Pinega, in the North, Archangel-way, where Marie was born. She grew up in Russia, but her father died and she went to live with her mother in Paris, still young enough to get a thorough French education. She studied natural science, specialized in biology, and worked at this all along, mostly as an assistant or sub-editor on biological publications. It is little known that in 1915 Marie Goldsmith became a doctoress of natural science, having presented a thesis, *Physiological and Psychical Reactions of Fish*. In general, animal psychology fascinated her and she published the book "Comparative Psychology" (in French, Paris, 1927). Her mother was a charming lover of bird-life.

They were among the nearest friends of Peter Lavrov in Paris, later of Kropotkin, of James Guillaume, of the older generation, while many of the younger group of advanced and revolutionary Russians gathered round them, and Marie was in the milieu of that group of French Socialist students who in the early nineties became Anarchists, issued a number of publications, stood nearest to *Le Temps Nouveaux*, to Grave and to Kropotkin, and in fact still work along the same lines. Marie Goldsmith was with them to the last. She helped also the Russian Anarchist publications promoted by Goghelia, Kropotkin, Shapiro and others. Her writings, some reprinted as pamphlets, were usually signed M. Tsidin, Marie Korn, M. T. or M. K. She is well known to the readers of the *Freie Arbeiter Stimme*, *Dielo Truda*, etc.

It is supremely tragic to see her depart together with her mother, for whom she cared above everything, as her devotion in other directions and the affections of her many friends would never have failed her, but would have attenuated her isolation. But it was her own wish to do what she did. Sixty years of intimate revolutionary and libertarian recollections are wiped from memory forever with the departure of these old friends whom I knew since 1901, and who were always kind to me.

Jan. 18, 1933—8 Argyle Sq. 3,
Carlton, Victoria, Australia

Dear Comrade:

Your letter Dec. 12 received. Australia is down and out, with no sign of improvement. The Arbitration Court continues reducing wages, the Unions hold meetings and protest, there the matter ends. The workers will submit to any injustice, compulsory arbitration is their only outlook. Voltaire once stated the world was full of fools, and he would leave the world as wicked and foolish as he found it. There are 500,000 unemployed in Australia, living on a dole of six shillings a week for single men and ten to twelve shillings a week for married men with families. There are 30,000 children leaving school every year, with no prospect of work. This is the result of trusting to political prostitutes. The Communists are putting forward political candidates who want some of the plums. The Communists go one further than the Labor men, endeavouring to get on the workers' backs. I sometimes think that life is a farce, and all things show it. I used to believe it but now I know it.

Dear Comrade, I enjoyed reading those letters. I intend to read them often. They are instructive. I continue to keep the Anarchist flag flying. I can look back as far as 1886, when I spoke at a meeting to protest against the murder of our Chicago comrades, when we sent a petition of protest to the President of the United States. Several times I have been in jail since then. I am old now, next year I will be seventy. Many of the old comrades are dead, and I am the last of that proud race. The young today are duds, who have no wish to be free; Anarchism cries in the wilderness. When I go Anarchism will have no propagandist in Australia. I look back with the satisfaction that I have lived my life. The life of a Free Anarchist. My small effort is not like yours, but it is an effort. Anarchism has been my all in all, when I have earned my living. One of the Old Guard, unable to march much more! Some day a race will come who may think of a solitary who struggled to be free. I will fight on.

Long live Anarchism!

Yours fraternally,
J. W. Fleming

The above letter from our old comrade comes to us through Emma Goldman. —H. K.

* * *

The Labadie Collection of Anarchist literature in the library of the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Mich., will some day be a regular gold mine of information for future historians. It will show that this is the "Age of Insanity," and will have no trouble in proving it. C. N.

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FREEDOM SPRING COSTUME BALL

FRIDAY, APRIL 7TH

Irving Plaza Hall
15th Street and Irving Place, New York City

Tickets 50 cents

* * *

Donald Crocker of the Libertarian Group will speak on "Anarcho-Syndicalism" Sunday evening, April 2nd, at the Clarion Club, 327 East Ninth Street, New York City.

Multatuli — An Anarchist Seer

By RUDOLPH ROCKER

(Translated by Jules Scarceriaux)

It was in 1860 in Amsterdam that there appeared a book carrying the strange title of "Max Havelaar," or "Sells at Unctions of Coffee from the Netherland Commercial Society." The author of this work named himself Multatuli, but soon it was learned that he was a high functionary of the Dutch government in the Netherland Indies, named Edward Douwes Decker, who had chosen as pseudonym the Latin name "Multatuli," which means "who has suffered at lot."

This book marks an epoch in universal literature; it is one of the most original manifestations. It is a fiery protestation against the inhuman cruelties of the Dutch colonial politics; a marvelous mixture of ferocious irony, of burning hatred and exasperated rebellion. One could think that it was written with the tears of thousands of human beings tortured and reduced to slavery; it is the bitter cry of a heart that calls for justice. It has seldom happened that a man alone, without friends and partisans, has found enough courage in himself to attack a government, a whole people, in such a powerful way as Multatuli has done in his "Max Havelaar." But it is not only his corrosive criticisms that give extraordinary weight to this work. Its form and great style reveal at the first glance that we are facing a genius. This book is like a volcano. It boils and bursts into flame as a sea of fire, it impresses as the gesture of a liberator.

"Max Havelaar" was, morally, a death sentence for the Dutch traffickers in coffee. Multatuli tore down their stupid masks and brutally showed them naked, mercilessly exposed their sordid infamy, their dried-up hearts and rotten souls.

Portrait of Drogstoffel

"Max Havelaar" begins with a characteristic declaration by the coffee handler, Batavius Drogstoffel: "I am commissary in coffee and my address is Luriengracht, No. 37." From the start we know with whom we have the honor to entertain ourselves. Drogstoffel is the true typical Dutch handler, the merchant in general, the living incarnation of a whole class. His vital principle is shrunk to coffee and is concentrated on coffee. He considers all public and political questions according to their connection with his commerce; for him there only exist two classes of individuals: those who understand something about coffee and those who do not understand anything about it. The first are really useful to society; it is not worth while to bother with the others. He lives, sleeps and dreams in the company of coffee, with "God on his lips and coffee handling in his heart." In a word, Drogstoffel is the personified merchant, the handler with an intriguing moral, hypocritical decency, narrow honesty, with the punctuality of an automaton; a man whose ideas and feelings develop in his stomach instead of growing in his brain.

By luck, Drogstoffel converts himself into a literary man. A friend of past years (actually a wretched individual who does not even own an overcoat) gives him a package of manuscripts. Among them are poesies which naturally do not produce any impression on the handler; nor do the other productions. They begin to get on his nerves when he comes across a manuscript entitled: "Information—Culture of Coffee in Medana." It is a surprise and a great one too. Still, deep in himself Drogstoffel cannot understand how a man who composes poetry and walks the street without an overcoat is able to write anything no matter what about coffee. Still, the writing is interesting and he finally decides to compose a book himself, with the material furnished by his friend of days gone by.

Appropriately, it happens that in the house lives a certain Ernest Stern, a German handler's son with whom he has business relations, a young man endowed with some literary aptitudes. Everything is marvelous. Stern writes a few chapters every week; Fritz, Drogstoffel's son, corrects the spelling and the daughter Mary copies the manuscripts bound for the printshop. From time to time Drogstoffel himself interpolates a chapter in order to have the work present a practical interest. The first four chapters are from his brain, and it is easy to imagine their contents. With the fifth, the true story of Max Havelaar starts.

Before the reader's eyes pass marvelous pictures with loud colors: A whole paradise; but in this paradise, the tragedy of a whole people unrolls itself. And Multatuli tells that which he has witnessed with such vigor that the heart is full of anguish and the soul moans from suffering. . . .

Well! This book was composed in a poor garret in Brussels, written with the bitterness of a man who had tried everything and had never succeeded in anything. Multatuli was without bread, without light when, with his febrile hands, he narrated the hard experiences of his life; his misery was such that he had to borrow two sous from a boy to buy a bottle of ink.

Storm of Calumny

The work was as effective as a lightning stroke; but Multatuli had to stand the calumnies and injuries of the Drogstoffels he had nailed to the pillory. (Multatuli had to stand a trial due to the publication of his book.) Not only that, but his editor refused to publish a second edition of his "Max Havelaar," in which he had poured out his soul. It was only ten years later, when his heirs sold the author's right to another editor, that his second edition was brought to light.

Multatuli suffered very much during these ten years, but his sufferings inspired him with force and courage and led him further. At the beginning, he busied himself nearly exclusively with the Indian question. Later he devoted his attention to all institutions of society. He saw himself in the situation of Dr. Stockman, the celebrated character of Ibsen's "The Enemy of the People," who at the start only spoke of the unhealthy water of the local bathing places and ended in discovering that all vital sources of society are poisoned by the mean egotism of the Drogstoffels.

(To be continued)

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English Propaganda Conference

Condensed Report

Saturday, Feb. 18 at 3 P. M., First Session:

Agenda Proposed: FREEDOM and other Anarchist Publications;

A Central Bureau of Anarchist Lecturers and Speakers;

An American Anarchist Federation.

After preliminary business and discussion, Comrade Harry Kelly, one of the editors of FREEDOM, opens the topic "Freedom, and Other Anarchist Publications." His opening remarks bring out in the main that it is his desire and earnest recommendation that the FREEDOM should be a Movement paper, that is, a publication responsible to the Movement and worthy of the support of the Movement . . . that we have at this time three other Anarchist publications but this Conference should have FREEDOM uppermost in mind and see to it that we can go on. . . . After six issues of FREEDOM he admits that he had heard some offhand complaints and some side remarks but none so far criticized seriously the publication as a whole . . . that it is his intention as long as he is connected with the editorial end of FREEDOM to pursue the work along the lines of "fair field and no favors."

He makes a number of explanatory remarks with regard to the editorial defects and the limitations so far in literary contributions, but he informs the comrades that he is in touch with a number of writers who will no doubt do their bit for FREEDOM as it goes along. He also stresses the financial condition of FREEDOM which must be strengthened and soon, in order to assure the publication an uninterrupted existence. Appeals to all comrades everywhere, essentially those who believe that FREEDOM is and will be a Movement periodical, to make every effort to help in the circulation and distribution of FREEDOM, and of course, to maintain it, so that the Anarchist ideology will reach out to greater and greater numbers.

A discussion followed in which several comrades participated who discussed the general appearance of the paper, the physical layout, the variety and length of the articles; that contents should be comprehensible not merely to Anarchists who know Anarchism but to new readers, and of course, must also appeal to the comrades who are to support it; that it should reflect the Movement and activities of the comrades and groups; that we must make sure whether we can continue weekly before we run into big deficits, and we should find ways and means for wide distribution. The discussion leads to the presentation of a tentative budget, presented by Comrade Grosner, for a whole year showing both the possible income as well as a moderate expenditure for the year.

A lengthy discussion followed in which Comrades Wolf, Crocker, Slater, Keyser, Tanya Shapiro, Dolgoff, Starrett, Swieda and Lifshutz participated. Several of them thought the budget rather optimistic and not quite possible of attainment in these hard times. Grosner hereupon changed his entire course and showed the comrades a way of publishing FREEDOM at least for about two months as a test case, at slightly more than half its present cost but explained it would require an active committee of about fifteen comrades to do the work in the various departments voluntarily. After a more or less detailed analysis of this project, the comrades seemed to be in favor and endorsed it.

As the Session was coming to a close, a young "sapling," George Rubenstein of the "Rebel Youth" group addressed the Conference with a very warm and eloquent greeting, and the Resolution Committee was elected.

* * *

Next Session took place Sunday, February 19, at 1 P. M.

The Resolutions Committee which consisted of Comrades S. Mintz, Sarah Cohn, Walter Starrett, Swieda, Tom Wright, Alter Greenburg, Claire Comoran, Sam Dolgoff, Louis Keyser, Joseph Cohn and Abe Grosner reported. Comrade Mintz read the resolutions which were taken for discussion and the following resolutions adopted:

1. That besides delegates, active comrades are entitled to vote on decisions at this Conference.

2. That the columns of FREEDOM be open to all shades of Anarchist opinion, in other words, an open policy, while editorially it should be definitely Anarchist-Communist with a revolutionary Syndical-

ist viewpoint on the Labor Movement. (On this resolution the Vanguard delegates abstained from voting and withdrew from the FREEDOM management Board because they advocated a strict Anarchist-Communist policy and no open policy for the columns of FREEDOM.)

3. That an active, sustaining FREEDOM group be organized in New York and to help bring about similar groups in other cities.

4. That all groups throughout the country affiliated with the publication FREEDOM shall be urged to contribute at least $5.00 a month each.

5. That for the next two months, due to financial circumstances, as much work as possible in connection with the publication of FREEDOM be done voluntarily, and that it shall be published weekly.

6. That an immediate fund be raised for the sustenance of FREEDOM during the next few weeks.

The next question for discussion was the formation of an American Anarchist Federation. A number of comrades spoke but the consensus of opinion was that it is rather premature in view of the fact that there are not enough English-speaking groups in the country to consolidate them into an effective Federation. Hope was expressed that new groups would be formed everywhere and Anarchist propaganda carried on, and the formation of a Federation was postponed for the time being.

This led the Conference into the next topic of discussion—the creation of a Bureau of Anarchist lecturers and speakers. Joseph Cohn introduced this question by pointing out the necessity for having a Central Bureau to which comrades of groups in Greater New York and vicinity, as well as possibly groups from all over the country, can apply for lecturers and speakers on Anarchist and kindred topics. Comrade Simpson upheld Cohen's outline of the need and advisability of the creation of such a Bureau and said that the only way to do it is to do it, and of course, make a thorough study of the demand and the possibilities along this method of propaganda. A heated discussion followed and among others, Alter Greenberg, Dolgoff, Anna Sossnofsky, Dora Keyser, Roman Weinrob, Slater, H. Reiff, Grosner, Abe Bluestein, Wolf, Tom Wright and Swieda took part and offered various suggestions as to how the Bureau should be constituted and whether the lecturers and speakers should be limited in their topics, relating only to Anarchism, or to limit it to Anarchist-Communism exclusively as expressed by some, or not to limit it as long as those lecturers and speakers are known comrades.

There was no unanimity reached on the question but it was moved to select a committee of seven to try to bring about such a Bureau. In the committee of seven are, Joseph Cohen, Walter Starrett, Tom Wright, Abe Grosner, J. Frager, S. Mintz and Donald Crocker.

In this too, the Vanguard delegates dissented, refrained from voting and refused to accept in the Committee.

About fifteen comrades pledged themselves 25¢ and more per week towards the FREEDOM Sustenance Fund and a small collection was also taken up, details of which will be reported in the financial statement in the near future.

The Conference was very well attended by a good many comrades in addition to delegates from the following groups: Libertarian, New York; Amshol, Bronx; Free Workers Centre, New York; Vanguard; Jewish Federation; New Society; Clarion; Freie Arbeiter Stimme; Cultura Proletaria; Mohegan Group; Russian Toilers; Rebel Youth; Centro Sociale, White Plains; Kropotkin Group, Stelton, New Jersey.

Claire Grosner,
Secretary for the Conference

Book Review

By AMMON A. HENNACY

Roger Williams, New England Firebrand, by James Ernst, Macmillan Co., N. Y. 1932.

When the Swiss and Italian Republics allowed no religious and very little political freedom, Roger Williams, banished from Boston by the Puritans, established Providence, and for fifty years sought to establish a government "by the choice and free consent of the people," a government founded not on the policeman, but on the free citizen. The painstaking study of original documents and court records in New England and in England by Mr. Ernst furnishes a detailed picture of this man who at the age of eleven declared himself a rebel against his father's religion and became a Puritan. Later on he became a Separatist and founded the Seekers: those who acknowledged that each man had the right to seek the truth in religion for himself and needed no church or paid preacher to guide him. Although preaching all of his life among Indians and white men, Roger Williams earned his own living and would accept nothing for his ministerial labors. Williams stated that "there is no church, no sacraments, no pastors, no church officers or ordinance in the world nor has been since a few years after the Apostles."

One reason for his banishment from the Puritan colony was his refusal to countenance the robbing of the Indians, as the Puritans had stolen from the food caches of the Indians and had never paid them for the land they had taken. Even in cases where Indians were captured in battle Williams did not allow them to be made slaves, as did the other white men.

Mr. Ernst states that: "To the men in power in Massachusetts Bay his teachings sounded like the voice of anarchy. Liberty of conscience and the rights of man conveyed to them images of terror and social perversion not unlike in effect to those of Sovietism and Communism to post-war capitalism. The principles he proclaimed were looked upon with equal horror and fear by the ruling classes in England and Europe."

The ownership of all lands was held by the town; each man owning some land of his own, which he could not sell except with the consent of the community, and holding a share in common in pasture lands. There was the initiative, referendum and recall of all officers and acts of officials. Unjust and unpopular laws were soon repealed.

The Anarchist will be interested in the statement that: "There was a time when men lived without government and civil laws and were guided in their life by the laws of instinct and nature 'written in the hearts of all mankind'." Williams believed that the civil state was non-religious and could not be called truly Christian in that it could not show "a commission, instructions or promise given it by the Son of God." He believed in the right of the people to do away with kings, parliaments, general courts and "vast interregnums, ruptures of government." He believed in reason and in arbitration by a third party rather than obedience to law through fear of it. In any transition to a society run on the Anarchist principle there will be conflict over many matters which will have to be adjusted by some form of mutual agreement. Roger Williams' idea of the state and of government approached that of the Anarchist, that government was only to be used as a tool for common ends rather than a coercive power. He was an Anarchist in religion as he acknowledged no church authority, although he was tolerant enough to allow his wife to be a member of the church in Salem. Today in his State of Rhode Island, government has become a tool of property.

Here and There

The interest the City of Detroit has to pay on its debts amounts to over $40,000 a day, and we are still borrowing more. We call this a business administration!

The following wisdom is from our local oracle Henry Ford:

"The biggest delusion is that we were in good times in 1929 and are now in hard. It's the reverse. The panic was three years ago; we're now getting well. . . . Five more years of those old times would have ruined the country. . . . More people will live through these times than would have lived through a prolongation of the others. . . . The old artificial line between rich and poor has disappeared—the so-called rich today comprise our poorest class."

The *Atlanta Journal* very rightly remarks: "One great trouble with this country is the fact that too many of us think that a man who has made a million dollars is an authority on every subject under the sun." * * *

A classified ad in the *Detroit News* asking for men to dig a ditch at 35 cents an hour and to appear at Livernois and Pilgrim avenues with shovels at 8 a.m., attracted 1,500 men and required a police detail to keep the streets and sidewalks open. The prospective employer did not appear.

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We now hire help by inches. Under "Help Wanted Female" appeared the following classified ad: "Waitress—Experienced, neat, refined, good personality; size 32-34, 8857 Grand River." C. N.

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VANGUARD FORUM

at the International Centre, 227 E. 12th Street
New York City
EVERY SUNDAY, AT 8:30 P. M.

March 25th
S. WEINER
"Fascism"

April 2nd
A. SOLOMON
Lecture-Recital—Beethoven's Music

April 9th
Symposium on
Anarchists and the Trade Unions
Discussion *Free Admission*

Lectures Under Auspices of the
LIBERTARIAN GROUP
Of New York (Anarchist)
Meets at
International Centre, 227 East 12th Street

M. SCHMIDT
"The Future of Libertarian Struggle"
March 29th

L. SECO
Secretary of Kentucky Miners' Defense Committee
"The I.W.W. and the World Crisis"

Open Forum, Questions and Discussions
Invite Your Friends—Admission Free!

Grim death descended upon us once more and robbed us of a young Comrade. We mourn the loss of Comrade FRANCIS LIBERTY, and express our heartfelt sympathy to our Comrade, Guy Liberty, in his sudden bereavement.
LIBERTARIAN GROUP OF CLEVELAND, OHIO

I.W.W. Defence Committee for the Kentucky Miners is giving an affair Saturday, March 25th, at the Free Workers Center, 219 Second Avenue, New York City. Comrades and friends are asked to come and help make it a success which the Defence Committee urgently needs.